

The last chapter is again by Zlatkevich and deals with radiothermoluminescence. In this technique a sample is irradiated with high-energy radiation at low temperatures then heated. The resultant 'glow curve' results from recombination of trapped electrons with the parent cation and can give useful information about transitions and relaxations in the polymer. Zlatkevich provides a readable and comprehensive review.

Overall, this is a well produced and readable book which will be of interest both to practitioners of luminescence methods and to anyone looking for an overview of the field. Some parts of it should be read with the critical faculties fully engaged.

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University of Sussex

Rigid Rod Star-Block Copolymers

William H. Dickstein

Technomic Publishing AG, Basel, Switzerland, 1990, 106 pages, SFr 108

ISBN 87762-673-1

The preparation and properties of star or radial polymers and block copolymers have been of interest for over 20 years, since it was demonstrated that structures with controlled arm length could be synthesized, predominantly by anionic techniques. This modest monograph describes a logical step forward in which mesogenic units are incorporated as one of the blocks in the radial molecules.

The first two chapters, or one third of the book (33 pages), review some of the relevant literature covering liquid crystalline polymers, radial polymer synthesis and the preparation of telechelic polymers. The remaining 71 pages are devoted to the experimental details of the

synthesis of some radial block copolymers using a new blocked functional anionic initiator, and the subsequent characterization of the products.

While the work described will be of interest to those in the block copolymer and liquid crystal field it should be pointed out that the monograph appears to be no more than the author's PhD thesis. One has to wonder whether, at a cost of approximately £44 (or 41.5 p per page), this book is a rather expensive way of obtaining limited information which could easily have been published in one or possibly two papers in the open literature. However, in this age of the entrepreneur, perhaps one should not criticize anyone for attempting to obtain a small additional income from work carried out over a three to four year period at current postgraduate rates of pay.

J. M. G. Cowie
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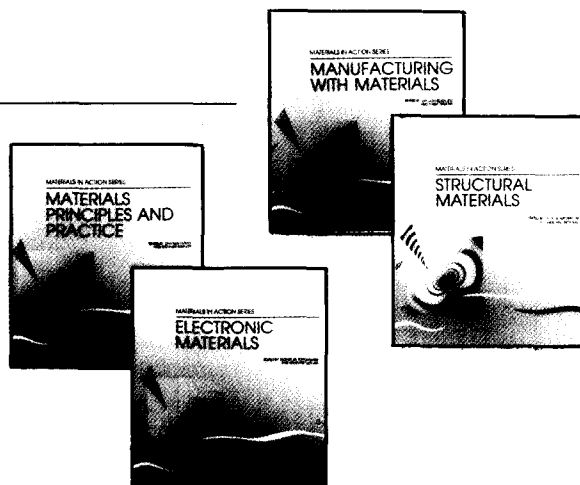
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